

Council on Postsecondary Education
March 24, 2006

Distance Learning Advisory Committee Report

The Distance Learning Advisory Committee (DLAC) met March 22, 2006. The meeting included an update on the status of the KYVU response to the 25 recommendations made by a Special Committee of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) following its May 2005 visit. The response, describing how KYVU has complied with some recommendations and detailing the strategic planning process currently underway to respond to the remaining recommendations, will be submitted to SACS April 1, 2006. The KYVU response will be reviewed by SACS, who will issue a report following its June 2006 meeting. A timeline and list of milestones for the KYVU response and strategic planning process is attached (Attachment A).

As part of the KYVU strategic planning process, DLAC charged its working group, the Distance Learning Steering Team (DLST), to develop recommendations for KYVU to incorporate into the new strategic plan. The recommendations address who KYVU should serve, address in what ways it should serve its constituencies, suggest guiding principles, recommend KYVU explore alternative names rather than continue calling itself a "university," and propose changes to the KYVU advisory structure. These recommendations were presented to DLAC and were approved at the March 22 meeting. A copy of the DLAC approved recommendations is included (Attachment B).

KYVU Strategic Planning Timeline & Milestones

Dates	Milestones
May 1-4, 2005	SACS Special Committee visits KYVU
June 15, 2005	Report of the Special Committee sent to KYVU with October 1, 2005 deadline
June 30, 2005	The Distance Learning Steering Team, the operational group of the DLAC, meets
July 1, 2005	CPE hires Allen Lind as KYVU Chief Executive Officer
September 1, 2005	Deadline for response extended until April 1, 2006
September 29, 2005	DLST meets to discuss the Report of the Special Committee
October 5, 2005	Distance Learning Advisory Committee (DLAC) assigns operational charge of assisting KYVU to the DLST
	KYVU initiates Strategic Planning Process
October 11, 2006	CPE/KYVU SACS Response team begins bi-weekly meetings
November 18, 2005	KYVU convenes 69 representatives of instructional partners for day-long analysis of their expectations for KYVU and its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
December 13, 2005	DLST meets
December 16, 2005	KYVU Staff Day-long Strategic Planning Retreat
January 11, 2006	KYVU and CPE staffs meet in day-long retreat for a similar SWOT analysis
January 26, 2006	DLST meets
February 6, 2006	DLST - KYVU Planning Workgroup begins meeting to develop recommendations for DLAC
February 16, 2006	DLST meets
February 17, 2006	KYVU conducts focus groups of instructors and students using KYVU services
February 22/25, 2006	KYVU staff spend one and a half days developing KYVU draft versions of mission and vision statements and core values
March 16, 2006	DLST approves KYVU Planning Workgroup recommendations
March 22, 2006	DLAC approves DLST recommendations for KYVU Strategic Planning Process
April 1, 2006	KYVU response to the Report of the Special Committee submitted to SACS
April 2006	KYVU develops draft of KYVU Strategic Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mission & values statements – Strategic Directions
April 2006	KYVU works with DLST/KYVU Planning Workgroup to review Strategic Plan
April 2006	DLST meets for interim discussion of KYVU Strategic Plan
May 2006	KYVU expands Strategic Plan draft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – S.M.A.R.T. Objective Statements – Define Roles and Responsibilities
May 2006	KYVU & DLST/KYVU Planning Workgroup review and finalize Strategic Plan draft
May 2006	DLST meets to recommend KYVU Strategic Plan to DLAC
June 2006	DLAC meets to review and endorse KYVU Strategic Plan
July 2006	CPE meets to approve KYVU Strategic Plan

March 22, 2006

Distance Learning Steering Team KYVU Planning Workgroup

Recommendations to DLAC for Consideration in the KYVU Strategic Planning Process

The KYVU Planning Workgroup was established by the Distance Learning Steering Team (DLST) to develop recommendations the DLST would consider for recommendation to the Distance Learning Advisory Committee (DLAC). These recommendations would address the most salient issues DLAC should address regarding the strategic planning efforts undertaken by the Kentucky Virtual University. The members of the KYVU Planning Workgroup are: Gary Pratt (NKU), Tad Pedigo (UK), Dennis Robinson (UofL), Dan Connell (MoSU), Sandy Cook (KCTCS), Myk Garn (CPE), Chela Kaplan (EPSB), Allen Lind (KYVU), Penny Armstrong (OEOD), Linda Pittenger (KDE), Michael Clark (KET), and Terry Magel (KSU).

The workgroup established five questions for discussion and development of recommendations. These questions are:

1. Who does KYVU serve?
2. In what ways should KYVU serve its constituencies?
3. What should be KYVU's core values or guiding principles?
4. Should KYVU call itself a "university?"
5. What is the proper advisory structure for KYVU?

The full DLST, after consideration and discussion, approved the following five recommendations March 16, 2006. The DLST now forwards these to the DLAC with the expectation DLAC will recommend KYVU consider these recommendations as part of the current KYVU strategic planning process.

1. Who does KYVU serve?

Issue: As KYVU looks to its future mission, it must determine its audiences. KYVU currently serves Kentucky's learners through partnerships with postsecondary education institutions and state agencies. As the postsecondary institutions continued to develop their own infrastructure to deliver distance learning, KYVU's role changed to also serve state agencies. With KCTCS implementing its own CMS, hosting the participation by postsecondary education continues to shift. KYVU is at a point of determining who it should serve and how those audiences should be served.

Recommendation: KYVU should serve as a facilitator and advocate for distance learning in Kentucky by bringing together collaborative partners among multiple audiences to promote lifelong learning in Kentucky. The primary audiences KYVU should recognize and include are Kentucky's postsecondary education institutions and its state agencies.

2. In what ways should KYVU serve its constituencies?

Issue: How should KYVU serve its multiple constituents? KYVU currently is a provider of many services. The types of services vary by constituent groups. As KYVU transitions between being primarily a provider of services to a broker, facilitator, and catalyst, it must be a good steward of limited resources.

Recommendation: In the role of broker, facilitator, and catalyst, KYVU will identify distance learning issues and bring together postsecondary institutions, state agencies, and other entities to collaboratively find solutions. The statewide Kentucky “virtual” collaborative environment should:

1. **Expand Programming.** Identify, convene, and lead initiatives for collaboration among postsecondary education, public education, state agencies, and others to discuss common issues, develop common solutions, and expand online education.
 - a. Be a focal point for data collection and analysis about distance learners and distance education.
 - b. Expand the amount of eLearning programs available to Kentuckians through targeted program development, i.e., increase number of online degree programs, completer degrees, professional development and workforce development initiatives, and accelerate efforts to help more Kentuckians successfully complete GED programs and transition to postsecondary education.
2. **Expand Capacity.** As a broker, enable and support common standards and technology solutions resulting in economies of scale through shared resources and common needs for consistent support toward lifelong learning, i.e., connectivity, KEN, KET, KYVL, statewide CMS, helpdesk, and live communications. As a catalyst, encourage and support innovative technology-based approaches for teaching and learning that increase the attend ability and instructional capacity of instruction its partners make available i.e., interactive approaches -- gaming and simulations, shared content objects, and online tutoring services.
3. **Reduce Barriers.** Partner with CPE to reduce policy and practice barriers that prevent lifelong learning and advocating for access through the latest technologies. Identify and address policy issues including increasing transfer, identification and utilization of common competencies, agency training converted to credit, and career paths.
4. **Market Opportunity.** Connect Kentuckians to postsecondary, workforce education/training, professional development, and career pathways, and K-20. Create and expand awareness of multiple and diverse distance learning opportunities, matching them with learner needs, through marketing of distance learning opportunities offered by postsecondary institutions, school districts, state agencies, and other entities to meet identified needs in the Commonwealth.
5. **Expand Support Services.** Bring together postsecondary education, public education, libraries, state agencies, and others developing collaborative strategies supporting eLearning in the Commonwealth. Facilitate collaborative testing and adoption of new technologies in support of teaching, learning, and research within the libraries, and for the citizens of Kentucky. Enhance collaborative efforts of the Kentucky Virtual Library, including expansion of licensed databases and the addition of multi-media collections, learning objects, curriculum support materials, and additional resources for all KYVL constituents and partners.

3. What should be KYVU's core values or guiding principles?

Issue: The SACS Special Committee recommended "that a clear and comprehensive mission statement be formulated which guides its (KYVU) continuing operations and development..." A first step in the process of developing a mission and strategic plan is to identify guiding principles that will provide a framework for the development of a mission statement and a strategic plan. The mission and plan will be guided by the "Five Questions" of the Public Agenda:

1. Are more Kentuckians ready for postsecondary education?
2. Is Kentucky postsecondary education affordable for its citizens?
3. Do more Kentuckians have certificates and degrees?
4. Are more college graduates prepared for life and work in Kentucky?
5. Are Kentucky's people, communities, and economy benefiting?

Recommendation: The workgroup recommends that KYVU consider the following "guiding principles" as it formulates its strategic plan:

1. Enable providers to identify and use best practices and offer the highest quality services to students connecting Kentuckians to postsecondary, workforce education and training, professional development, and career pathways, and K-20.
2. Convene and facilitate opportunities to collaborate and advance access to education through technology.
3. Maximize benefits to learners by being a good steward of resources.
4. Reduce redundancies by being an equitable broker, a bridge and, a transparent connection facilitating cooperation between institutions, agencies, and learners.
5. Incubate and support innovative approaches to teaching, learning, and research utilizing educational technology.
6. Support quality improvement efforts to continually assess educational technology.

4. Should KYVU call itself a "university?"

Issue: The SACS findings raised the question of whether it is appropriate to use the term "university" when referring to KYVU. Since the postsecondary institutions award degrees, offer the courses, maintain accreditation standards, and have responsibility for faculty, it may not be appropriate for KYVU to be labeled as a "university." Institutions feel use of the term "university" is not appropriate while agencies have indicated it is not required.

Recommendation: The KYVU should not use the term "university." The KYVU should explore alternative names which retain the brand awareness of KYVU while more clearly denoting its evolving mission and role in Kentucky's postsecondary education environment.

5. What is the proper advisory structure for KYVU?

Issue: In its report of June 15, 2005, the SACS Special Committee recommended that “the Distance Learning Advisory Committee take an active role in fulfilling its statutory requirement, i.e., making recommendations to the CPE regarding policies ‘to be used by the Commonwealth Virtual University’. The CPE endorsed expanding the scope of DLAC and established a Distance Learning Steering Team to address implementation of:

“the expansion of the scope of DLAC to include not only its statutory mandate to advise the Council on the operations of the Kentucky Virtual University but also to address the coordination of policies, programs, support services, and infrastructure in support of distance education across all Kentucky postsecondary education institutions” (May 24, 2004).

While this better addressed the need for on going operational discussions, it did not address inclusive representation of a growing distance learning community, including adult education and other state agencies.

Recommendation: In order to ensure a broad representation of distance learning communities and interests, DLAC should:

1. **Establish an Executive Committee.** The Executive Committee shall be charged to ensure that issues from all Kentucky distance learning communities are equitably and adequately addressed. The primary functions of the Executive Committee shall be to (a) review and recommend when necessary membership of DLAC and DLST and (b) set meeting agendas for DLAC and DLST sessions. Executive Committee membership shall consist of the DLAC chair, the DLST chair and vice chair, KVHS director, and the CEO of the KYVU. To ensure the primary communities of postsecondary education academia and state agency training are represented, the DLST chair and vice chair positions should each be filled with an alternating representative from academic and agency communities.
2. **Establish Official and Adjunct DLST Members.** Each member of DLAC will nominate a representative for the DLST. These designees of official DLAC members will comprise the voting membership of the DLST. Additional academic and agency representatives may attend, participate in, and serve on the DLST as adjunct members.
3. **Add members to DLAC.** The executive director of the Office of Employee and Organizational Development, the executive director of the Education Professional Standards Board, the vice president of Kentucky Adult Education, and the President of ConnectKentucky should be appointed to DLAC. The DLAC membership should be revised by other appointments as needed.